

Boswell Briefing...

By Congressman Leonard Boswell

Expanding renewable and alternative energy is crucial

Every day, I hear from constituents, through meetings, emails, phone calls, or personal letters, about their struggle with the high cost of energy. I am encouraged the Administration has moved forward to develop a national energy policy. Yet, as I have mentioned many times, our focus should be on alternative energy such as ethanol, soy diesel, biomass, wind, hydro, and solar. All these forms of energy can and should be at the center of our efforts. We must protect our environment while becoming energy independent.

The Bush Administration's approach relies too heavily on government-backed drilling for new sources of oil and gas in environmentally sensitive areas. The Administration is focused on promoting nonrenewable energy such as coal and oil. While I applaud the effort, I am concerned about the lack of focus on promoting alternatives like ethanol, wind, hydro, biomass, soy diesel, and methane to lessen our dependence on foreign oil.

I strongly support efforts to expand renewable energy resources. Renewable and alternative energies are extremely important to Iowa for many reasons. Using renewable energy is good for the environment. According to a University of California-Irvine study, every 500 megawatts of wind generating capacity can reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas, by more than half a million tons annually, while also cutting emissions of sulfur dioxide by 637 tons, nitrogen oxides by 1,496 tons, and particulate matter by 17

tons. According to a report released by the American Lung Association, air pollution from particulate matter, produced by the burning of fossil fuels and other materials, causes thousands of premature deaths and costs the national economy some \$11 billion each year. I am a cosponsor of H.R. 876 which provides a 5-year extension of the credit for producing electricity from wind to promote this clean energy source.

Expanding alternatives is also a boon to the economy. More than 13,250 Iowa jobs are affected by ethanol. Ethanol contributes more than \$2 billion to the U.S. trade balance each year. When the Bush Administration made the decision to deny the oxygenate waiver in California, I was gratified because I have worked for many years to promote ethanol and personally advocated for the denial of the waiver. Our state will prove to the nation that we have the capacity to produce energy which promotes a cleaner environment and lessens our dependence on foreign oil while helping the farm economy.

I will work to bring a greater understanding to the vast benefits of producing and using renewable sources of energy in the state of Iowa and our nation. Now is the time for our nation to make a commitment to our environment through the use of alternative and renewable energy sources.

If you have comments or are having difficulty with a federal agency call my office toll-free 1-888-432-1984.
